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Report Nixon, LBJ Squeeze On the CIA

By JOSEPH VOLZ

Washington, May 18 (News Bureau) — Presidents Johnson and Nixon pressured an unwilling cia to spy on political dissidents in the UnitebsStates, the Senate Intelligence Committee said today.

In a staff report, the committee said that the CIA's major domestic snooping program, "Operation Chaos," amassed the names of 300,000 Americans although actual files were maintained on only about 7,500 persons. The seven-year program was halted by then-CIA Director William Colby in March 1974.

Sen. Frank Church (D-Idaho), committee chairman, has frequently criticized the CIA for acting as a "runaway agency" performing operations unknown to top civilian leaders. But the staff report said that "Operation Chaos," was "not sought by the CIA."

Xms' Testimony

The report added: "By all the available evidence it was pressure (from Johnson and Nixon) which led" to the program.

Former CIA Director Richard Helms testified during hearings earlier this year that he was responding to Johnson's interest in finding out the extent of foreign influence on antiwar dissidents in the United States. Helms said that he had received no specific instructions to infiltrate and spy on the antiwar groups but he noted: "What I am attempting to say is that when a President keeps asking if there is any information ... it isn't a direct order but it seems to me it behoves the director of central intelligence to find some way to improve his perforance."

Reminder to Kissinger

Nixon requested a worldwide survey of student dissidence which the CIA compiled in 1969. But Helms reminded Henry Kissinger, who was then Nixon's national security affairs adviser: "This is an area not within the charter of the agency so I need not emphasize how extremely sensitive this makes this paper."

Among the activities in "Operation Chaos" were:

- Infiltration of the 1971 demonstrations in Washington against the Vietnam War.
- Spying on New Left groups and the Black Panther Party.
- Joining the radical community to provide intimate personal details on the leaders to both the CIA and FBI.

Other Spying Programs

The agency also created two other domestic spying programs in the late 1960's, "Project Resistance" and "Project Merrimack." Resistance was designed to report on possibilities of violence to CIA campus recruiters. Eventually the program was broadened to include campus dissidents in general and 16,000 names were collected. Much of the material was clipped oct of newspapers, although field offices developed campus officials and police as sources.

"Project Merrimack" infiltrated part-time agents into dissidents groups in the Washington area in order to gain advance warning of demonstrations. The CIA was particularly interested in four groups — the Women's Strike for Peace, the Washington Peace Center, the Congress of Racial Equality and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee as "indicators" of protest activity.

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